

REMARKS

Reexamination and reconsideration of claims 1-12, 14-16, and 32-42 are respectfully requested. Applicants acknowledge and appreciate allowance of claims 17-27 and 29-31 and recognition of allowable subject matter in claims 13 and 44. Claims 13 and 44 are cancelled herein without prejudice and claims 28 and 43 were previously cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 1, 7-9, 14, and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 102(b) applying U.S. Pat. No. 4,846,566 (the '566 patent). Independent claims 1 and 32 have been amended to include the subject matter that was indicated as allowable by the Examiner. For at least this reason, the withdrawal of the section 102(b) rejection of claims 1, 7-9, 14, and 15 is warranted and respectfully requested.

Claims 1-12, 14-15, 32-39, 41, and 42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 103(a) applying U.S. Pat. No. 5,319,730 (the '730 patent) without a teaching reference. Independent claims 1 and 32 have been amended to include the subject matter that was indicated as allowable by the Examiner. For at least this reason, the withdrawal of the section 103(a) rejection of claims 1-12, 14-15, 32-39, 41, and 42 is warranted and respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 14, and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 103(a) applying U.S. Pat. No. 4,863,234 (the '234 patent) without a teaching reference. Independent claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter that was indicated as allowable by the Examiner. For at least this reason, the withdrawal of the section 103(a) rejection of claims 1-3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 14, and 15 is warranted and respectfully requested.

Claims 10 and 41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 103(a) applying the '730 patent in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,137,936 (the '936 patent). Independent claims 1 and 32 have been amended to

include the subject matter that was indicated as allowable by the Examiner. For at least this reason, the withdrawal of the section 103(a) rejection of claims 10 and 41 is warranted and respectfully requested.

Claims 6, 32, 33, and 36-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 103(a) applying the '566 patent without a teaching reference. Independent claims 1 and 32 have been amended to include the subject matter that was indicated as allowable by the Examiner. For at least this reason, the withdrawal of the section 103(a) rejection of claims 6, 32, 33, and 36-39 is warranted and respectfully requested.

Claims 16 and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 103(a) applying the '566 patent in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,137,934 (the '934 patent). Independent claims 1 and 32 have been amended to include the subject matter that was indicated as allowable by the Examiner. For at least this reason, the withdrawal of the section 103(a) rejection of claims 16 and 40 is warranted and respectfully requested.

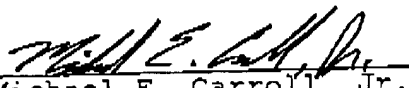
Claims 16 and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 103(a) applying the '730 patent in view of the '934 patent. Independent claims 1 and 32 have been amended to include the subject matter that was indicated as allowable by the Examiner. For at least this reason, the withdrawal of the section 103(a) rejection of claims 16 and 40 is warranted and respectfully requested.

No fees are believed due with the filing of this Reply. If any fees are due in connection with this Reply, please charge any fees, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 19-2167.

Allowance of all pending claims is believed to be warranted and is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is welcomed to telephone the undersigned to discuss the merits of this patent application.

Respectfully submitted,


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